2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco SI7

must then be on the alert and have his horses and mules well secured. 136
The settlers generally hunt the jaguar by means of hounds, of which of course a great number must be used. Badly attacked by its assailants, the beast at last seeks refuge in climbing a tree, where it is generally easily shot.

The natives stand in great fear of the jaguar, looking upon it as the 125
incarnation of an evil spirit, and the beast does in fact seem to have far less respect for the Indian than for a white man. In the religion and mythology of the Chaco Indians the jaguar plays an important part.

The puma is rare, and the same may be said of the maned wolf (*Canis* 136
jubatus) which is reported to exist in the Chaco, for I never saw or heard of any. The fox is very common on the plains, and its howling or barking is one of the characteristic sounds interrupting the silence of night. Of birds there is no great variety in the Chaco. Doves, wild turkeys, and small parrots are, in addition to ostriches, the birds most commonly seen in the pampas regions and forests. Only at the big lagoons, found here and there in the interior of the country, may one notice a rich bird-life, especially during the dry season. Ducks of different kinds, white and yellow herons, storks, and other aquatic birds in countless numbers give life to these places, whither also many animals of the forest descend to allay their thirst.

Venomous snakes, even rattlesnakes, are quite common on the plains, especially during the dry season. Both in the river Pilcomayo and in the lagoons alligators are found, although in the Argentine and Bolivian Chaco they are not as numerous as in the Rio Paraguay. The rivers moreover abound in fish, and all the Pilcomayo tribes live mainly by fishing.

Insect-life is very rich in summer-time. Different kinds of mosquitoes, crickets, large beetles, and especially the *Cicada* with its shrill whistling, shortly before sunset and at night fill the air with their weird sounds, innumerable croaking frogs joining in the concert. These manifestations of lower animal life, as they are perceived at sunset, are, I believe, the things that most impress a traveller in the Chaco.

Although mosquitoes are numerous and troublesome in the summer, the climate is on the whole healthy. Malarial fever does not occur, except [164]
when it is occasionally introduced by settlers or other white men. Rheumatism and catarrhs are the ailments from which the natives most commonly suffer.

The scarcity of water has been the greatest obstacle to the explora- 133
tion of the Chaco. In the Bolivian Chaco the traveller preferably keeps to

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18. The Star-woman (second version) (Martin)

There was a man who was very ugly. Nobody liked him. One night he stood where the others were playing. Looking upward he saw in the sky a pretty red star. He said, »I would like to marry her.» As soon as he had made this wish the star stood near him. The woman said, »I came because you called me.» He told her that he loved her. They were married. But after a few days they quarreled. The woman went back to the sky and the man followed her.

The Morning Star is an old man who has a big fire. His fire is cold. The star-woman was the daughter of the Morning Star. In the sky it is very cold. The father of the star-woman burned his son-in-law and ate him. His soul entered an owl called *tyustáx* which says »wek, wek, wek.»

C. THE TRICKSTER

19. Origin of the Corn

Tawkxwax sowed only one gourd in his field. The armadillo went to him and asked for a seed, but *Tawkxwax* refused to give it. The armadillo then cut off the end of his own tail, which was covered with granulous scales, and stuck it in the soil. Beautiful corn stalks soon sprouted from the ground. At that time the armadillo was the only one who had corn. *Tawkxwax* had gourds, melons, sorghum, sugarcane, peanuts, oranges, bananas, but no corn. He called on the armadillo and begged for some grains of corn, but the armadillo refused because *Tawkxwax* had been stingy when he had wanted some gourd seeds. Besides he never gave anybody his new plants. *Tawkxwax* went for a walk to a forest. He got tired and sat down beside a *yuchan*[1] tree. He started to carve this tree into the shape of a horse. He changed the wood into a living animal. In the same way he made a saddle, reins and bridle. Then he set out on

[1] Bombaceae, silk cotton tree. The trunk has the form of a bottle; hence the popular name of the tree, *palo borracho* (drunk wood).

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horseback. The people did not know what a horse was as they had never seen one. *Tawkxwax* was hungry so he went to the armadillo's house. There he succeeded in trading his horse for corn. With the corn in his possession, he called all the men together and distributed corn among them. He taught them how to cultivate it. The people at first were afraid. Many thought the plant was poisonous. Others said it was very good food. Finally all were convinced and from that day on people have always had something to eat. Mankind is indebted to *Tawkxwax* for food.

A man who heard of *Tawkxwax's* horse went to the forest in order to carve one for himself. He carved the *yuchan* so awkwardly that he made a tapir. Thus also did men make mules and donkeys.

20. Origin of Certain Wild Plants

Tawkxwax climbed a *yuchan* and fell down head first. As he fell the thorns of the tree tore his body. He removed his stomach from his body and buried it. From it grew a plant (*iletsáx*) the root of which is very large and full of water. His intestines became lianas. Like a cow *Tawkxwax* had two stomachs. With the second he made a plant called *iwokanó*.

21. The Origin of Serpents (Pedro)

In ancient times there were no serpents. One day *Tawkxwax* found a thick rope. He picked it up but threw it away later on. After a while, thinking it might be useful, he went back to get it. He looked and looked but he could not find the rope. At last he found a serpent and thought that perhaps it might be the rope he wanted. A serpent is therefore called *niyǫ́k* or rope. *Tawkxwax* wanted see whether this new animal he found could bite so he began to tease it. The serpent did not bite him. He held fire to the mouth of the serpent until it bit him severely. The first serpent he made poisonous was the *yarara* (*hatenekwę́mę*). When the other

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serpents heard of this they went to *Tawkxwax* and wanted him to heat their mouths too. *Tawkxwax* heated the mouths of the *lančitąx, katitsul* (rattlesnake of the bush) and the coral *čalaxčetáx* The *aguara* (*iwalęk*) remained a very harmless serpent as he was afraid and ran away when *Tawkxwax* began to heat his mouth. The serpents which did not come to *Tawkxwax* to have their mouths heated are not dangerous at all (XI, p. 98).

22. Why There Are Poisonous Serpents (Pedro)

Formerly serpents were harmless and they would have remained so had it not been for *Tawkxwax*. He is a fool, a trickster. He got the silly idea of taking a live serpent and heating its mouth. From time to time he let it bite him in order to see the results of his burning. He would not stop until the fangs of the serpent were full of poison. Then the serpent bit him and *Tawkxwax* became very ill. Since then serpents have been dangerous.

23. Origin of the Sting-ray (Pedro)

One day as *Tawkxwax* was walking by the side of a lagoon he found a piece of leather. He picked it up, looked at it and threw it into the water. Shortly afterwards he decided he wanted the piece of leather but could not find it. He put his hands in the water to feel for it and was stung. He saw that he had been stung by a sting-ray and realized that the piece of leather had changed into a sting-ray.

24. Why the Mistol Trees Walk No More (Pedro)

X 539 X 773

In days gone by mistol[1] trees could walk. They could be driven along by people shouting or making a noise to frighten them. They would hop and fly just like grass-

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[1] Mistol (*Zizyphus Mistol*) is very useful to the Matako. They eat its fruits and with its ashes they make alkali which they chew together with coca leaves.

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told his murderers that they had killed him, but that he would revenge himself by killing them too. He took some of the blood which ran from his wound and threw it at them. The blood changed into disease and from that day on men have been killed by disease. Before that time disease did not exist. (XIII).

56. The Welán-Woman (Pedro)[1]

A woman was heard crying one night and when the men asked her what the trouble was she said that they had killed her son and that she was going to eat their sons. At midnight she left her house and caught and ate a child. She did this many times. When the parents of the children kept awake to protect them the *welán*-woman made herself invisible. Finally they could stand it no longer and decided to kill the woman. They killed her but because she was a *welán* she came to life again and went right on killing and eating children. The men realized she could not be killed permanently so they decided to look for another shelter. They hollowed out a *yuchan* and entered it but it was very hot and they were obliged to leave. They slept in the open and the woman ate many children. From there the *welán*-woman proceeded to another village, Pozo del Tigre, and started eating children there. The men of Pozo del Tigre proved more astute. They killed the *welán*-woman and then they started a big fire and burned her. When she was in the fire the embers craeked up and jumped in all directions. Those which fell in the forest changed into jaguars domestic cats, pumas, tapirs and snakes. Those which fell into the water became rayfish, *surubi*, *piranya*, *bagres*, *pacu* and other water animals.

57. The Spirits (Pedro)

The spirits, that haunt the imagination of the Matako, are called *ho?nat-Lele* (dwellers of the ground) or *honatsi-Lele*

[1] This tale is the sequel of the preceding.

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very cruel and the men of ancient times did not know where to flee. They tried to dig out the *yuchan*, but *Asus* cut off their heads and they are still enclosed in the *yuchan* where they are spirits. *Asus* hangs the heads of the women close to the hollow *yuchan* in which he lives. He never goes out during the day, only at night. Men must be very careful not to sleep in the open, otherwise the bat will cut their heads off.

F. ORIGIN OF WOMEN, FIRE, MYTHICAL CHARACTERS

64. The Creation of Women (Martin)

The first men lived by themselves, they had no women. They had only a mother, a very old woman who had her house some distance from theirs. Every day the men went to hunt birds and deer. They ate the meat in the forest but saved the blood to give to their mother. The old woman said to herself, »What will these men do alone?» She made some small pots and put in them the blood her sons had given her. Her sons wondered why she was so secretive and never joined them, but every day they gave her more blood which she stored in her little pots.

During the night one year later the men heard children's voices coming from their mother's house. The men said, »How can this old woman make children». They watched and in the morning they saw five girls. The old woman had produced them from the blood of the deer which she placed in the pots she had made. The old woman is a falcon, called by us *tale.*

65. The First Women (Martin)

The first people were animals who could speak. They lived by themselves without women. They fished every day and their storehouses were filled with fish. One day they found that some one had stolen everything they had stored. They decided that the best thing to do was to leave a guard to

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keep watch. They left a parrot. The bird climbed a tree and the others said, »When the thieves come, you must screech and we will run back.»

Shortly after the animals had left, the parrot heard voices coming from the sky. He looked up and saw women climbing down on a rope. They took everything they could eat. Then they slept under the tree in which the parrot was hiding. The bird instead of doing what he was told dropped small twigs on the women. At last the women awakened and said, »Who is in the tree, maybe they are ants, or perhaps it is a parrot.» They started to look and finally discovered the parrot hidden among the foliage. They picked up the seeds of a tree (*árbol del sapo*) and they threw them at the parrot. One of the seeds struck the parrot on his tongue and from that time on the parrot has had a black tongue. It seems that while the parrot was on watch the iguana heard the noise made by the women and he warned his friends but they would not pay any attention to him as the iguana was believed to be deaf. The descent of the women took place while the iguana was eating, just after he had come back from the forest with firewood.

In the evening the other people came home. They said, »Where is the parrot?» The parrot was mute, all he could do was make gestures and point to the sky. They looked at his tongue and found it black.

The next morning the *aipés*[1] (or *akpés*) was left to guard the food. At first the women were afraid, then they caught him and pulled out his tongue which they replaced with a fruit seed of the *árbol del sapo*. The lizard remained mute like the parrot. At night when the people found him they were very surprised to find that he was speechless. They held a council to determine who should guard the camp that night. They chose a hawk[2] for a sentry. The women climbed down

[1] Lizard very much like the *ututo* lizard. It lives on trees.

[2] A kind of black hawk. It eats serpents and rodents. The Matako call it *čalená*.

X 539 X 773 up to their fields and tried to catch the women. They buried themselves in the ground in an effort to escape, but the armadillo said he would dig them out. He dug out one after another. The men took them. The same thing happened each time he pulled a woman out of the ground. In the end, angry because he could not keep a wife for himself, he put out the eye of a woman and made her so ugly that no one wanted her. From that time on men have had women.

X 539 X 773 826 The wild women had toothed vulvas. A bird saw then eating corn with their vulvas. He warned the people, but *Tawkxwax*, the Trickster, would not believe him and slept with one of the women, who cut his penis. *Tawkxwax* took a bone and put it in place of his lost organ. He then went in pursuit of the woman and found her just as she was crouching to light a fire. He threw a stone between her legs and broke the teeth of her vagina. From that time on men have had sexual intercourse with women without being mutilated.

67. The Stealing of the Fire (Pedro)

X 539 X 77. 372 In olden times the jaguar was the sole owner of fire. He would give some of it away only if presents were given him in return. The people would take fish to him and in exchange the jaguar gave them fire with which to cook. Once a rat with a flattened head, the *sičúm*, tried to steal some fire. He dug his way into the earth until he was underneath the hearth of the jaguar. The jaguar had been watching his fire and he saw the rat just as he was about to take an ember. He struck the rat on the head and that is why it is flat now. Another rat succeeded in stealing an ember. This rat has a black spot on his neck. He was lucky enough to get close to the fire without being seen. He picked up an ember and ran off holding it against his neck. He still has a burnt spot there, the mark of the fire. Using the inside of a cactus as tinder he lighted a big fire and then he distributed it. That is why all men have fire.

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68. The Stealing of the Fire (second version) (Martin)

At the time when there were just animals, the jaguar was the only one to have fire. He bad a big hearth. A little rodent, the *wiyés*, passed by. Whenever the jaguar turned his head the rabbit would put some embers aside. The jaguar saw that he was touching the embers so he said, »Don't touch the fire, you will burn yourself.» The little animal pretended that he was cold and was shivering. He picked an ember up and put it under his chin. He said to the jaguar, »I go, I feel warm». He ran away and threw the ember into the middle of a meadow. All the world began to burn. The jaguar went to put the fire out, but he could not. In this way the people of the world got fire.

Now the jaguar had no fire. He decided to take it away from man. He went to their village and sent a woman with a jar full of water to put out the fire. The woman emptied the jar, but could not put out the fire. She and the jaguar got their soles badly burnt. Hence the soles of a jaguar's paws are dark.

The jaguar went back to his den very ill. He remained there a long time in such condition. As no one came to bring him fish in exchange for fire and as he did not know how to hunt, he suffered greatly from hunger. He spent days and nights in his hut on an empty stomach and he was very miserable. One day a little tiger cat (*silak'ai*) called on him. This animal was an expert in hunting and he decided to teach the jaguar how to catch food. The tiger cat leaped on animals, killed them and brought his victims to the jaguar. The first victim of the tiger cat was an *aguara*, (*potsax*) a very large bird which eats crabs. The cat jumped on the *aguara* but was not able to kill him outright. The bird flew into the sky and it was not until they were 300 feet above the ground that the cat killed him. They dropped to earth but the cat was not injured. He took the bird to the jaguar. Within ten days the jaguar learned to hunt by himself. He killed

X 539 a little bow with arrows and asked all the men of the country
X 773 to present it to the child. The man from whom the child would accept the bow would be his father. More than a hundred men gathered to present the bow to the child but he would take it from no one. At last the *chuña* appeared and the child took the bow from him without hesitating. When the people of the village discovered that the *chuña* was the father of the child they got angry and wanted to kill him, but the *chuña* married the woman.

X 539 As soon as the child recognized his father, the people
X 773 rushed toward the bird to kill him. He did not know how to defend himself, but his wife gave him a sling and with this he
● 825 defeated his enemies. During the fight he threw a stone which struck the neck of the *potsax*. This bird was so badly hurt that the blood spurted out of the wound and after it dried the neck of the bird had turned black and it had remained so ever since. The *Lokotax* bird was struck by a stone which tore off his scalp and to this day he is bald. The yulo (*wutnax*) was struck in the eyes and now his eyes are circled by a red band. The *istiwintáx* bird was hit on the nose and his nose has remained swollen and red. The *tok* bird was wounded in the breast. The woodpecker was hurt on the head. Although the *chuña* was the victor of the battle a bird (*nęčę*), very like the *chuña*, succeeded in making his nose bleed and that is why the *chuña's* beak is red.

73. The Magic Pregnancy (third version) (Martin)

X 539 In ancient times there were many people and in one tribe
X 773 there was a twenty year old woman who had never been with a man. One day her father and mother noticed she was pregnant. She had left the house to get some water and on her way had found something ressembling a small white ball. She picked it up and sucked it like a piece of sugar and from this she became pregnant. When the child was born it was not known who its father was. All the men wanted to marry the girl but she did not care for any

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what had happened to his brother. She told him and the boy decided to try to rescue him. He arrived at the old woman's house but sat down with great care. He grabbed hold of the old woman and started to beat her, asking for his brother. The brother was freed and he told about the other people being held captive. They beat the old woman until she set them all free. The people rescued the brothers appointed them *caciques* (XVII) and went home with them. Upon reaching home the elder brother's wife wanted to become the younger brother's wife as well, but he would not hear of it as he was afraid of his elder brother.

G. THE ANIMALS

All animals are still men, their souls are men and live as such with habits corresponding to those of the animals they represent. The Matako understand the language of the *yučandon* (aquatic bird) which warns them whenever an enemy has come to attack.

The *kiličuk* owl sleeps all day and gets up only at 8 o'clock in the evening. Then he goes to the river where he catches *wáhat* (*sabalo*). He is a very good fisherman and at midnight takes the first catch to his wife. She prepares a part of it to be eaten immediately and saves the rest for another meal. After giving his wife his first catch he returns to the pool and fishes until dawn, then he goes home to sleep.

The jaguar always talks with a medicine-man, assuring him that he is his friend. He has a soul the same as men. He calls the Matako *etekičalax* (black heads) and says that their flesh tastes good.

77. The Ray

One day while passing a lagoon a man heard a noise under the water. He dove into the water and saw people building a big house. The ray (*poxwin*) was the master carpenter and taught him how to make such a house. The ray had many houses, bright and furnished with everything. He had a

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store also with maté and many clothes. The Matako houses are in the form of a ray because they learned from the ray how to build them:

78. The Spider

In ancient times the spider was a woman who taught weaving to a Matako girl. When she knew how to weave, the Spider, who was still a woman, changed into an animal. The Matako learnt from the girl how to weave their ponchos and belts.

79. Why the Indians are Dark

A green frog (*hanatáx*) came out of the water to change its skin. It met an Indian and suggested that they exchange skins. The Indian was distrustful of the frog and would not accept his offer. Some other Indians came along and changed skins with the frog and they became white. Their skins were as white as the skin of a German and were so because they had trusted the frog. The first Indian and his friends were afraid to change their skins with the frog and so they have remained dark.

80. The Origin of the Otter

A boy went to take a bath in a river. He refused to get out of the water and go home. He was changed into an otter because he stayed in the water too long.

81. The Origin of the Ant-bear

An old woman was picking berries in the bush. She refused to go home and was changed into an ant-bear (*sulax*).

82. The Origin of the Jaguar

A man went fishing with his wife. He climbed a tree to catch parrots. He threw the parrots down to his wife who was on the ground. From the top of the tree he saw her

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eating the parrots he had thrown down. He said, »Why are you eating the parrots?» He climbed down the tree and went up to her but she broke his neck with her teeth. When she went back to her house her children rushed up to her to see what she was bringing home. She was carrying her husbands' head. The children said, »Why do you bring the head of our father?» She answered, »This is not the head of your father, it is an armadillo's head.» During the night she ate her children and then ran away, to the bush and did not come back. She changed herself into a jaguar. Jaguars are women.'

83. The Eel

A man passed a lagoon and saw a dog coming out of the water. It was a female dog whose teats were full of milk. The animal was very bad and the man, who was afraid, ran away. The dog caught him and bit him. The man was changed into an eel (*iʔñá*).

84. The Origin of Wild Pigs

Some women went to gather *caraguatá* to make bags. In the evening they did not return. The following morning the men went out to search for them. They found only wild pigs *nitsáx* into which the women had been changed.

85. The Larva of the Pini Bee

Formerly the larva of the *pini* wasp was a man. He was stout and fat and his nose was dark.

86. The Palometa Fish[1] (Pedro)

Once upon a time the palometa fish (*nixwúk*) was a man and he had a cow and a donkey. One day he decided to find the source of all water. He killed his cow, dried the flesh and loading the donkey with the dried meat went in

[1] Palometa (*Serrosalmo piranha*). Voracious fish.

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search of the source of water. After a while he arrived at a swampy place where he and his donkey sank into the mud and died. The man was changed into a palometa fish.

87. The Woman and the Dogs (Pedro)

Formerly there was a woman who lived by herself and went hunting with her dog as a companion. One day the people of her village noticed that she was pregnant and as she was not married they wondered if she had taken her dog as a husband. She gave birth to a dog. After a while she had another baby dog and people knew that the dog was her husband. Instead of killing her dogs she suckled and raised them as though they were real children. After they were grown their mother took them to hunt and showed them which animals to catch. The dogs could not speak but they understood perfectly what their mother said. She told them to leave the spotted animal, the tiger, alone. They must not approach the peccaries, nor the majal, (the two species of Dicotyles) for they were very dangerous. They could kill deer but if they happened to meet a puma they were not to follow him to the trees, but wait for the hunters. She also told them that when they followed an armadillo they had better not bite his nose or he would curl himself into a ball. Neither were they to attack the *aguara guasu* (Canis Azarae) nor the tapir. Care was necessary when attacking an ant-eater and a certain kind of coati. With the tiger-cats they were to take the same precautions as those taken with the puma and not follow it. It they should meet with a fox, who was very much like themselves they might fight him but if after a little while they found him to be stronger, they must grab him by the throat. They could kill with impunity all kinds of armadillos, turtles and a variety of small fox. They were to be cautious regarding deer. Females could be attacked but the males with horns were very dangerous. They were to be careful with the iguanas as

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their bites were dangerous to dogs. Snakes should not be attacked.

One day the woman sent her children hunting. They killed a tapir. When they returned they were hungry so their mother skinned the tapir and fed them the meat, as she took good care of them.

As her sons were excellent hunters a man came to the woman and asked her if she would let them accompany him on a hunt. The woman was very fond of her children and as she knew hunting was dangerous, she sent her nephew along with them. The nephew was old and experienced. Time passed and the dogs did not return. Finally one of them appeared and when the woman asked him where his brother was he did not answer, saying only »is, is, is.» (»All right»).

He told his mother that the jaguar had killed his brother for the fun of it, he had not eaten him. Some men killed the jaguar and gave the woman its flesh which she ate. She made a *pimpim* (drum) and she sang for two years. After two years she had ceased thinking of her son, but she always accompanied her dogs on the hunt for fear they would be killed.

88. The Woman and the Dogs (second version)

Once there was a woman and a dog and they used to go hunting together. The woman became pregnant and the people said that the dog had made her so. The people were thinking, »She is pregnant and she is not married. Only the dog with whom she goes around could have made her pregnant.» She gave birth to a dog. The second one was a dog and so was the third. Then the people said that it was true that she had intercourse with the big dog. The woman always spoke to the dogs, but they could not answer. When she spoke to them they could understand her. They say that when the dogs wanted to speak they said, »is, is, is, is». That was the language of the dogs. Whenever the woman

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told them to come and drink water they would do so. If the woman said, »Go and lie in the shade», the dogs went to lie in the shade. If she said, »Come and have some water», they came and drank. Whenever the woman would say, »Go with so and so,» they went with him, but when the woman said, »Let us go hunting», if they did not want to go they just lay where they were. If she said, »Let us go hunting,» they stood up, but one always stayed at home. Only two went to hunt.

The woman did not kill them, she gave them her breast and they slept there. She stretched on the ground and the pups sucked. When they were full she got up.

People always asked her for dogs which could hunt. The woman said. »My sons, if you do not want to go send one of your brothers to go with this man. If you come across a dangerous animal do not go near him and take care to retreat a little. The wild pigs are bad. You will recognize the jaguars by their spots, they are very bad. If you see an armadillo, be prudent, if you bite his shell it will pinch your nose. Do not be afraid of ostriches they are safe. If you hunt a wild boar (Spanish *chancho majal*) you must know that it is dangerous. Do not go near it. When you are after a jaguar, do not climb the tree that it is on, wait for people, for they will follow you and will come soon. When the people arrive they will kill the jaguar, it will fall, it will die.»

The people came back after having killed a jaguar. They gave the skin to the woman. She said, »It is fine. With this skin I will make a litter for my children.» The people also brought meat to her whenever they went hunting with the dogs. They distributed the flesh to her in order that the dogs might eat abundantly.

One day another man came. He said, »Aunt, I came here in order to see if you would lend me your dogs so I might go and hunt.» That evening the people came back. The woman said, »It looks as if my sons had hunted animals.

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they are full.» »My sons, here is water if you want to drink, drink and then go to sleep.»

Another man came and asked for the dogs. He took all three. That evening two dogs came back to their mother, one was missing. The mother said, »It looks as if something has happened to one of my sons, he did not come back with his brothers.» The people were arriving and one said to the mother, »The jaguar killed your son. The jaguar was in a thicket and it ran after the dog. The dog escaped but the bush was so high that he could not pass through and he was seized by the jaguar and killed.» People gathered before the woman's house and said, »Aunt, people are coming with the body of your son.» They buried the dog. The mother wept, »What a pity, I loved you so much.». The woman was always thinking of what had happened and she refused to give her other sons to anyone because the jaguar had eaten one. The mother would go with them to hunt and when they arrived at a place where there were no people she would give them advice. »When you pursue a dangerous animal don't bite it. The *coati* is bad, the ant-bear too. The fox is not so bad and the white armadillo and iguana are harmless. Take care of snakes, the *yarara*, of the coral, and the *kapitsil*. The rattlesnake is very dangerous. You must know a big fox with a black mouth. Take care of the tapirs; they will seize a dog by the neck and throw it to the ground. Be on your guard when you hunt a male deer, it has horns and can kill you. The male deer has a bad smell, but the female deer has no smell and that is good. If you run after little armadillo (*peludo* in Spanish) he will dig a hole in the ground. Wait until the people come and dig it out and kill it. Turtles are entirely harmless.»

89. The Woman and the Bird[1] (Pedro)

When birds were still men, they lived without women. One day they gathered to sing so that the women could pick

[1] See the tale *Tawkxwax* and the Birds., p. 34.

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as husbands the men who sang and beat drums the best. The *letseniwótáx* sang first and did so well that two women went to live with him. Each bird sang in turn and they sang well that each got a woman and some of them, the *letseniwotax* and the *soytín*, got two. When it was the *suxñay* turn to sing, the bird which sings so mournfully near graves, he sang such a horrible song that a woman who was menstruating filled her hand with blood and smeared on the bird's face. He went to the river to wash his head, but could not remove all the blood and he still has a bit of red around his beak.

90. The Pigeon and the Egret (Pedro)

The pigeon used to have a long beak like the egret. He lived close to the lagoons where he could get fish. One day the piegeon and the heron decided to go fishing together. The pigeon's horse was very fast while the heron's horse was slow. The pigeon made fun of his companion's horse so they decided to separate and see who could get to the lagoon first. The egret had been fishing for a long time when the pigeon arrived. The pigeon started fishing immediately and he was in such a hurry that he broke his beak on the first fish he caught. He did not know what to do. He went to the forest and repaired his beak with wild beans (*poroto del monte* in Spanish). Since that time he has not fished, but has lived in the forest eating fruits and insects.

91. The Humming-bird (Martin)

Once upon a time there were some people. A girl of these people married a young man from another village. The boy was very small and therefore the people would not be friendly with him, they hated and made fun of him and did not believe he was able to sow and fight like the others. The name of this little man was *Tuxtan* and he is said to have been a humming-bird.

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Tuxtan and his wife lived in a little hut opposite the village. He had a dog and a tiny spear and one morning he said to his wife »I will go to hunt tapir.» He went with his dog to a lagoon where all the animals came to drink water. He saw a tapir, killed it and in the evening returned with it on his shoulders. The people saw him with the tapir and they took it away from him, not even leaving him a piece of meat. *Tuxtan* said, »What shall I do?» He went away from the village and cleared a field. He planted pumpkins, melons and all kinds of fruit. At harvest time he would gather his group and put it in a storehouse many miles from the village. In order to store his crop he would be absent from the village several days and when he returned he would bring just enough fruit for his wife. Some children playing in the village discovered near *Tuxtan's* house pumpkin and watermelon rinds. This they called to the attention of their parents. The villagers went in all directions to try and find his fields, they looked for six days and on the seventh they located his storehouse in the forest. They took everything in it, not even a seed was left. *Tuxtan* was again without food and he wondered what he was going to do.

He had a big family in his country and one day he took his spear and arrows and set out across the desert. He came to a lagoon. He remained there waiting for jaguars and ant-bears to come for water. When a jaguar came he killed it and he did the same with an ant-bear. In this way he killed five jaguars. With the skins of the jaguars and ant-bear he made himself some clothes.

He made many arrows and for each bunch of arrows he made a bow. One night he returned to his village to visit his wife. He found her asleep with another. He killed them both. The people knew where *Tuxtan* was living so they buried the woman and her lover and set out after *Tuxtan* to kill him. They found him near the lagoon but *Tuxtan* resisted them and killed all of them except for a chief and a few men. The chief said, »I will go and get more warriors.»

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Tuxtan answered, »I will go home, try to catch me.» The chief gathered all the warriors he could and then went back to attack *Tuxtan*.. One morning he heard the sound of trumpets and knew the warriors were coming. He said to his parents, »I have killed many people, you can escape with your goods, but I will stay here and rout these people, leave me alone.» His family ran away with the exception of his father and brother, they said, »If it is so, we will die with you.» The three destroyed the entire army leaving only the women (XVII).

92. The Chaja and the Charata (Pedro)

In olden times the *chaja* (crested screamer, Chauna torquata) and the *charata* (Ortales Canicollis) had different voices than those they have today. One day the *chaja* went to call on the *charata* and told him that his song was not fit for the forest and suggested that they exchange songs. The *charata* agreed and each went home with the song of the other. Since that time the songs of these birds have been different.

93. The Vulture and the Carancho (Pedro)

The vulture, *hato*, invited the *carancho* (hawk, Falco Rufus) to visit his fields. *Carancho* went with the the vulture but the *hato*'s fields were so hot that the *carancho* burnt himself and almost died. The *carancho* then invited the *hato* to look at his fields. The fields of the *carancho* were so cold that the *hato* barely escaped freezing to death.

94. The Deer and His Children (Pedro)

One day the deer went hunting, leaving his children at home. Before going he told them not to be afraid of the fire and not to run away if they should see it. He hunted for a long time and when he returned he brought some

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guayacan fruit to please his children, but he did not find them at home. They had not followed his advice and the fire had burned them.

95. The Jaguar and His Children (Pedro)

One day the jaguar decided to find out whether his children were cowards. He howled: »whoo, hou, hou.» Some of his children became afraid and some did not. He ate those who were frightened and spared those who were not.

96. The Puma and the Deer (Pedro)

One day the puma felt like eating a deer, but he was afraid since he did not know whether the deer had teeth. He decided to make the deer laugh so he turned around and showed his bottom, but the deer did not laugh. Then the puma showed his penis and the deer began to laugh. The puma saw that the deer had no teeth and so pursued and killed him. He ate one half of the deer immediately and hid the rest.

97. The Fighting Fish (Pedro)

All the fish were angry with *set*, a little fish which swims very fast. The *waxnoLe* fish lay in ambush at the spot where the river falls into the lagoon and opened wide his mouth. He expected the *set* to go into his mouth but the *set*, who is a courageous fish, managed to dodge him and the river water filled the stomach of the *waxnoLe*, which is the reason for this fish having a swollen stomach.

The *surubi* (*alax*) decided to attack the *wahát* (*sabalo*). The *surubi* warriors were more than two hundred strong and they were mounted on horses. They wore leather coats while they lay in ambush awaiting the *sabalo* who were coming down the river. The *sabalo* were not afraid because they were excellent swimmers. In fact the *sabalo* swam by so quickly that the *surubi* could not catch them and further-

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more the *sabalo* struck the *surubi* on their heads and made them one-eyed.

The *katukwetax* (yellow fish) and the *asak* fish, enraged by the misfortune of their friends, the *surubi* fish, decided to avenge them. Although the *atsa* had horses they could not kill the *sabalo*, who jumped from one side of the river to the other. *Set* and *sip* also tried to destroy the *sabalo* but even with their weapons, guns, swords, revolvers, they were as unsuccessful as the others.

The yiwis-fish (Spanish *vieja*) is the doctor of all the fish. If a fish is wounded *yiwis* sucks its wounds and sings like a medicine-man. In this way he manages to get the arrow point out of the wounded fish and the fish recovers. He cures all the fish just as the Matako medicine-men cure people.

One day some men heard a loud noise, like the trampling of a herd. One man went to investigate and he saw a score of donkeys loaded with ashes which were being taken to the *yiwis*. Ashes are the favorite food of this fish.

98. The Quarrel of the Fish (Pedro)

One day *WetyamLi*,[1] who was walking through the forest, heard two fish insulting each other. He went closer and saw the *tsonatáx* and the *ḳalḭ* quarreling. The *tsonatáx* told the *ḳalḭ* that he was ugly and the latter told the *tsonatáx* was even more ugly.

The *WetyamLi* again started walking and heard two other people fighting. This time it was the *kantax* who was telling the *xwolit* that he was bad looking and the former replied that the *xwolit* was still uglier.

Further on *WetyamLi* came upon two other people fighting, they were the *natsax* and the *silḭt*. The *natsax* told the

[1] I was unable to obtain any information about this character. The word *wetyamLi* means a »liar», a man who tells fish stories. It is possible that our *WetyamLi* is a sort of baron Munchhausen of the Matako folklore. See tale p. 74.

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silǫt he was homely and the *silǫt* replied that the *natsax* was even uglier because of his big mouth. *Natsak* in turn said that although his mouth was big, he was not as ugly as the *silǫt* whose mouth was too little.

Further on *WetyamLi* heard the *tsoktax* tell the *etékak* that he was very ugly because his head was flat and the *etékak* replied that he could not be as ugly as the *tsoktax* with his too big fins.

Still further on *WetyamLi* heard two more species of *palometa*[1] quarreling. The *nisčutax* was calling the *timętes* very ugly because his nose was so long and the latter replied that even if his nose was long the eyes of the *nisčútax* were too deeply set in their sockets and his mouth was always open, as if he could not shut it.

99. The War between the Donkeys and the Jaguars (Pedro)

In ancient times the donkey was a man and had a field. Once he sent his son to look at his field and when on the second day his son had not returned he began to wonder if the jaguar had eaten him. He went to the field and found the footprints of a jaguar who had carried his son off. He followed the trail of the jaguar, found him and punished him severely, for the donkey is stronger than the jaguar. The jaguar went home very ill from the kicks he had received. He decided to avenge himself so he organized an army to fight the donkey. In the army were all kinds of animals, the wild pigs, tapirs, foxes and *aguaras*. The donkey also raised an army. His army consisted of donkeys and insects. The jaguar's army stopped at one edge of a glade and the donkey's army stopped at the other side of the glade. The army of the jaguar began to fight and the insects rushed forward and entered the ears, eyes and mouths of the jaguar's army and they fled, greatly frightend. Hence the jaguars' noses are swollen.

[1] Palometa or piranha (*Serrosalmo sp.*).

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100. The Fight of the Serpents (Pedro)

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One day the *kapitsil*, (a big and very poisonous serpent) decided to fight against the ratte-snake. He said he would surely win because he was much the stronger. The rattle-snake realized it would be difficult for him to win because of the size of the *kapitsil*, but he accepted the challenge. They had a terrible fight and at last they killed each other. Their bodies lay on the ground where they had fallen, swollen and rotten.

101. The Dog and the Fox (Pedro)

Formerly the dog was as wild as the fox, who was his friend. One day the dog came close to a village. The people thought he was nice looking and gave him some food. The dog went back and told his friend the fox that he should go with him to the village and stay there where there was plenty of food. The fox did not agree and advised the dog that there would come a day when he would be severely beaten for stealing food. The dog did not pay any attention to the wise advice of his friend and went to live with the people while the fox remained in the bush. One day the fox approached the village and heard the dog crying. He wanted to know what the trouble was and the dog told him that he had stolen some fish and the villagers had beaten him. The fox then reminded him of the advice wherein he had told him what his fate would be.

102. The Ants and the Old Woman (Martin)

Once upon a time there was an old woman. She had two storehouses filled with algarroba pods. The ants heard about it and went to eat her provisions. The women sold one storehouse to the ants. After they had bought it the ants beat a drum during the entire night and at dawn they left the storehouse closed. It was locked for a year and everybody was jealous of the old woman because she refused to give

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away her pods. At the end of the year the old woman opened her storehouse and said, «If the ants don't come to take away their algarroba, I will use it.» When she opened the door nothing was left but the husks, the ants had already eaten everything.

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103. The Jaguar and the Armadillo (Pedro)

One day the jaguar ate the armadillo's children. To avenge himself the armadillo went to the jaguar and told him that he had a stomach ache from eating too many earth worms, and that he wanted to be cured. He opened his armor and the jaguar sucked his stomach in order to take the disease out. The armadillo let the jaguar put his head on his stomach, but the third time he closed his armor and the jaguar's head was caught. The jaguar was choking and tried to break the armadillo's hold by slinging him against a tree but he was held tight. The jaguar died of suffocation. The armadillo then went to an old woman, who cured the wounds made by the jaguar.

104. The Jaguar and the Aguara (Pedro)

Once upon a time the jaguar invited the *aguara* (Canis Azarae) to have a fight with him. He made fun of the *aguara* and pretended he had no strength. The *aguara* accepted the challenge and they fought. The *aguara* managed to have the sun blind the jaguar and taking advantage of this he killed him.

105. The Jaguar and the Alligator

The jaguar challenged the alligator. The latter accepted and, acting as if he were afraid, withdrew slowly. The jaguar, sure that he would be the winner, insulted the *yacaré* and followed him. The alligator entered the lagoon and in his excitement over the fight the jaguar also went into the water. In the middle of the lagoon the alligator began to

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fight and he killed the jaguar by striking him on the head with his tail and biting him on the neck. He let the jaguar rot in the middle of the lagoon.

106. The Dog's Beer (Pedro)

The dog gathered all the filth he could find, put it in a hollow *palo borracho* and made it into beer. When the beverage was ready he invited everyone to come and drink it. Birds and mammals hastened there and drank as much as they could. The animals unused to filth were disgusted and vomited, but the others, used to carrion and dirt, remained and got drunk, danced and sang while the dog beat his drum. (XVIII).

107. The Owl's Beer (Pedro)

The owl (*holit*) made some beer in a little trough and invited everyone in to share it with him. All came, but each carried an axe in case the beer did not hold out. When they arrived and saw the small container they burst into laughter and said that the little vessel would never contain sufficient beer to make them all drunk. The owl said that they should drink without worrying. Whenever the vessel was empty the owl looked at the interior and the vessel would fill again. The owl did this twenty times, until all his guests were drunk. When they left they were so intoxicated that they could not find their axes and furthermore they lost their hats and girdles.

108. WetyamLi[1] and the Deer (Pedro)

One day *WetyamLi* was in the bush. He saw a bee. He threw his stick at it in order to kill it, but he missed and the stick fell to the ground with a loud noise. He went to see what the trouble was and found that instead of killing a bee he had killed a deer. He skinned it, prepared the

[1] See p. 70

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meat and ate it. Then he continued on his way. While he rode his horse's rear foot slipped into a hole full of honey; he removed his horse's hoof and sucked it. Then he went on his way. A little further on he saw a *lachiwana*-bee. Without saying a word he killed it and ate the honey. He ate so much honey he started to choke, so he ran to a pool and drank some water to get the honey down. When he felt better he remounted and attempted to follow a deer. But in the pursuit his horse's testicles rolled themselves around a *palo santo* and broke the the tree down. The tree in falling crushed the horse.

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109. WetyamLi, the Ostrich and the Armadillo (Pedro)

One day as *WetyamLi* was hunting in the bush the strings of his sandals came loose and one of them killed an *ostrich*. *WetyamLi* roasted him and ate him before going further. A little later he heard someone coughing and as he approached the place from which the sound came he saw it was an armadillo. *WetyamLi* was going to kill him but the armadillo begged him to spare his life, explaining that he had almost choked on »mestizo» honey and asked him for something to drink. After the armadillo had drunk the water given him by *WetyamLi* he asked for a bag in which to put honey. He filled the bag with honey and gave it to *WetyamLi*.

WetyamLi went hunting with his dogs and they scented something. He found a little iguana trying to put a big slice of honey into her *sandia del monte* bag. She could not get the honey in because the bag was too small. The dogs followed the little iguana intending to kill her but she begged them to kill her father who was already full grown.

110. The Jaguar and the Tiger-cat (Martin)

The jaguar could not hunt. One day he met a tiger-cat. The tiger-cat said to the jaguar, »Grandfather, why are you

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lean? You use only one paw while hunting, don't you?» The jaguar answered, »I cannot hunt because I use only one paw.» The tiger-cat said, »I will teach you how to catch a bird or an animal with two paws.» Then the tiger-cat went out and caught a bird with both paws. He said, »You must hunt this way.» The jaguar went out and killed a cow, using both his paws. With the help of the wild cat the jaguar learned to hunt.

111. The Fox and the Jaguar (Pedro)

The jaguar is the master of all animals. He appointed the fox to dry meat for him, but he paid his servant very little and he was stingy about the meat he gave the fox. One day, while the jaguar was enjoying his siesta, the fox, who was obliged to keep the flies away from the jaguar, decided to avenge himself. He caught all the flies he could and put them in a bladder full of air. He tied it to the jaguar's tail. The jaguar had dogs who hunted by themselves and signaled to him the presence of game. The jaguar mistook the buzzing of the flies in the bladder for the barking of his dogs which he thought had found some animal. He woke up with a start and said, »It seems my dogs are hunting». He went to fetch his club and ran in the direction from which the noise seemed to come. When he had gone a short distance he heard the same buzzing in another direction and he turned back to the place he had just left, but then he heard the same noise near the spot he had just left. He ran there, but changed his course a few minutes later. He did the same thing four of five times until it occured to him to look at his tail. He understood the trick the fox had played on him and in great anger went home to punish him. In the meantime the fox had fled, taking with him all the jaguar's dried meat.

The jaguar followed his trail. He met a fox but he did not know whether it was the one he was seeking or another. He asked, »Did you steal my meat?» »No, it was my

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father-in-law.» To discover whether the fox was lying the jaguar asked him to defecate and he looked at the excrement. He found only bits of crab meat. The jaguar went away and left the fox in peace.

The jaguar went on a long journey and during his absence he entrusted his wife to the fox. As soon as the jaguar left the fox slept with his wife. Upon the jaguars return he smelt the vulva of his wife and noticed the odor of fox. The jaguar beat his wife and then went in pursuit of the fox, but could not find him.

112. The Jaguar and the Fox (Martin)

There was a jaguar living with his female. A fox called on him and said, »I want to be your companion.» Every day the fox and jaguar went hunting together. The fox called the jaguar »uncle». One day the fox said, »Uncle, I cannot go with you today.» »Well, stay here with your aunt.» The fox remained with the female jaguar. He slept with her and when the jaguar came back he found the fox with his wife. He ran forward to kill him, but the fox fled. The jaguar went after him and at last caught him by a hind leg. The fox mentioned that he had a thorn in his paw and asked the jaguar to lend him his knife. The jaguar handed him the knife, but the fox threw it away. As the jaguar went to pick it up the fox escaped. He concealed himself in a cave. The jaguar picked up a stone and painted it the color of himself and then put it at the entrance to the cave. Each time the fox saw the rock he decided not go out until he was so thirsty and hungry he could stand it no longer. »I will go out even if the jaguar eats me,» said the fox. He went and touched the stone and said, »The jaguar has fooled me.»

113. The Tiger-cat and the Rat

One day while the tiger-cat was hunting he found a rat which he intended to kill but the rat crept into a hole in the ground where the tiger-cat could not catch him. To induce

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him to come out the tiger-cat invited the rat to play with him. The rat said that he would never do that because he knew what the tiger's intentions were. The tiger-cat insisted and insisted, but the rat firmly refused to leave his hole. The tiger-cat threatened to call his friend the owl (*čiličuk*) and have him bring the rat out but the rat said that he would call his good friend the vulture to lift the owl high in the air and drop him on the ground. The tiger-cat was afraid and ran away. The rat then left his hiding place.

114. The Fight between the Fishhook and the Net (Pedro)

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One day the fishhook and the net quarreled. The net said that the fishhook was useless because he could not catch more than one fish at a time, while he, the net, could take many fish at once. The fishhook replied that it was true that the net was able to take many fish at one time, but if a piranha-fish happened to be caught in the net he could cut the threads, let all the fish escape, and make the owner very angry. The hook never let his prey go. The net answered that the fishhook was right, but that it was not exceptional for a *palometa* fish to cut the line from a hook and then the hook would be lost.

115. The Fight between the Earthen Pot and the Iron Pot (Pedro)

The iron pot reproached the earthen pot for not cooking the food fast enough. The earthen pot answered that it was easier to lift to put under the fire and after all he also cooked the food. The two pots fought and naturally the iron pot won.

116. The Fight between the Earthen Pot and the Calabash (Pedro)

The earthen pot once reproached the calabash for not being useful. The earthen said, »When they put you in the water you don't sink, but I sink even if the water is frozen.«

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NOTES

I. The Spirits of the Dead

1) *Husek* (*o-husek* or *no-husek* = my soul) is the »god» we have inside of us when we are living. This spirit goes away when we dream. It does not reside in any particular organ but is everywhere in our body. It is through the *husek* that we know what is going to happen. When we die the *husek* becomes an *āhat*, when the *āhat* dies it becomes a bird called *xwitson*. The *xwitson* becomes an *katak* fly and the fly a *ḳipḳip* bird, the *ḳipḳip* becomes a spider (*xwistę́*) and the *xwistę́* becomes a bat (*asus*) and then disappears.

2) The love spirit is called *soitayax*. She is beautiful, all adorned with necklaces and bracelets, exactly like a woman falling in love. She is very fond of men and it is she who commands women to love. When a woman leaves her husband and goes to another man, it is because her soul has tired of the first husband. In the same way a man takes another wife, his soul craves a change.

3) Now and then the *āhat* comes back shortly after death. In such cases, he is very bad. His eyes are yellow. If an *āhat* comes back he goes directly to the house where women are alone, generally the women become frightened and run away. The *āhat* like to sleep with women. They tell them that they are going to bathe and that they will come back very clean and good-looking.[1]

4) At times the spirit comes back to visit his grave, but this only occurs a few days after death, before he has had time to go to his family house in the underworld.

5) The soul goes to the abode of the dead riding a beautiful horse, well-saddled and carrying all that is necessary for the trip. The soul also drives in a car, from one village to another and wanders everywhere. On his way to the land

[1] It is said that the *āhat* are dirty, but my informant was not of that opinion. He told me that all the *āhat* he had seen were clean and beautiful.

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The medicine-man always knows beforehand when the red grasshopper (*čol*) will come. The striped grasshopper (*talesai*) lives inside a kind of very big gourd (*wotsotáx*). The grasshoppers belong to a master who sends them everywhere. During the summer they are out but at the first cold weather, they return to their squash.

Each year in the month of August, the medicine-men have a ceremony in order to go and see the *lachiwana* bees to ask them to come down to earth once more. For this event the medicine-men snuff *hatax* powder. They go up where the mother of all bees lives. She is as large as a house. To reach her the medicine-men transform themselves into *aguaraguasu* (*Canis jubatus*). The mother of the bees requires presents since she is afraid that by burning the old prairies her children might get burned too.

If someone speaks ill of a medicine-man, the latter's familiar spirit may enter the offender's body and thus avenge the insult. The soul of the medicine-man (*táxumit*) is ferocious. When the medicine-man is at odds with someone, his *táxumit* inflicts illness on the person with whom he is angry and no one except the medicine-man is able to cure the victim. It is wise therefore to stay on good terms with medicine-men.

IV. The Sun and the Medicine-men

The medicine-men may go and visit the Sun, Moon, the Night, the Rain and the Big Fire to make friends with them. During these trips they always go in gangs led by an older man who is expert in the difficult art of overcoming the numerous obstacles they meet on the way. He is the spiritual father of the younger medicine-men. If wandering medicine-men meet those of other villages, they fight and the spirits of those wounded or killed during the trips will be sick or will die on earth, for all that happens to the spirit must inevitably happen to the body. Medicine-men never fight on earth, and only while under the influence of *hatax* do

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IX. Storms

821 761 When a storm approaches with rain and thunder, little children's ears are to be covered each time the thunder crashes, otherwise Rain would take them under his arm and carry them away to his house. When such a thing happens, the child's body, which has remained on earth, becomes lean and white and all the food he takes is of no use. He visibly pines away, and it is not likely that a medicine-man can cure him. He will finally die without the cause of his death being known. The rain cannot do anything to grown-ups or big children, for it has not the strength to carry them away, [841] but it can harm menstruating women who happen to be out during a storm. Then they get very feeble.

X. Shooting Stars

821 787 Shooting stars foretell the death of someone. Meteors are stones thrown by the rain in order to fell the *quebracho*.

XI. Treatment of Snake Bites

752 835 When a serpent bites a man, it goes into the wound and climbs up in his body. When a man's foot is bitten by a-snake the leg must be pressed starting from the thigh, squeezing down to the place where he has been bitten. In so doing, the snake which has already had time to enter the leg, is obliged to go down into the big toe where it rolls itself up, tired. The operation lasts from evening to dawn and when the sun appears the snake gets cramped and vanishes under the ground. Once the snake is out the medicine-man has to suck the wound, for the departing snake has left its skin inside the body of the victim. The patient is completely cured only when the last piece of skin left by the snake has been removed. Otherwise he remains sick, has a headache and gets thinner and thinner.

If the progress of the snake inside the body cannot be stopped, the animal may go up into the head and blind the victim. It also goes to the heart and after repeated bites

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may kill him. The snake's *āhat* is called *punsoya* (perhaps Spanish-ponzoña : poison).

When a man is bitten by a snake he must kill the reptile and take it home in order to be cured rapidly. If he has been bitten while away from his home, he must dig a groove and put the snake into it, facing it in the opposite direction to that which he is taking. Thus the snake cannot enter him.

Tawkxwax taught the men the procedure to be followed in order to cure snake bites.

XII. How to Become a Singer

Those who want to become good singers must go to the bush and stay there for quite a long time. They must kill birds who are good singers and eat them after they have been made into powder and mixed with blood extracted from the arm. When they are in the bush they must first beat a drum, then run. Thus they will perhaps dream about a singing bird. When they wake up they must then take their drums and sing the song they heard in their dreams. One must not awaken until the song is finished or he will not remember it. Everyone has two songs and he must sing them every day in order to learn them. Ordinarily several young men go to the bush and after they have dreamed of a song they sing one after another. Generally three or four days are sufficient to master a song.

One must not sing someone else's song. If after one has eaten a bird he dreams of an iguana, it is no longer worth while to go on, for he will never become a good singer. The birds one dreams about and who teach one how to sing are not ordinary birds, they are *paata* (supernatural beings). The women do not know how to sing but they can cry when they have to mourn. Not all women know how to weep. In order to weep well, a woman must dream about another woman who is a good mourner. There are some exceptional women who can sing.

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584 chooses a husband for his daughter, but he would never go
585 against his wife's wish. The ceremony is not celebrated.
The son-in-law lives first at the hut of his wife's father where
he stays for three months at least, working for him. Later
591 he can build a hut for himself. The young couple live in a
separate compartment.

Nowadays either the bride follows the bridegroom or he
595 goes to live with her, according to circumstances. Ordinarily
men have only one wife, some have two, but never more.
[593] Except for adultery a husband never beats his wife. Although
837 a woman is exposed to a severe beating if her husband disco-
vers that she has betrayed him, it does not prevent many
women from doing so. A woman will choose a day when
her husband is absent and then send a child to tell her lover
that she is alone. A couple must not be seen together for
[519] there would be some gossip. A man generally leaves an
unfaithful wife after beating her first. He challenges his
[831] rival and they fight with knives. The different »milks»
must not be mixed up.

XVI. Chiefs

622 All the members of the tribe follow the *cacique* everywhere
without protest. As for him, he is responsible for all the
members of his group. If one of the latter has committed
[672] a theft, even outside of the tribe, the *cacique* will be arrested
by the police. Quarrels among members of the same group
[627] are settled by the *cacique*. If a big *cacique* is killed in a
[726] fight his troop retreats immediately, even if the other *caciques*
are still living.

XVII. War

726 In ancient times, when a young man was going to war,
he pinched the skin of his thigh and drove the sharpened
825 bone of a jaguar into it. This operation was supposed to
make the warrior courageous. Members of a war party
did the same with a peccari's bone so they would be fierce,

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with a charata (bird, *Ortalis canicollis*) bone that they might rise early, and finally with an owl's bone in order to see and fight in the dark.

Matako always attack at daybreak. They kill only men, young or old, burn the village, and take away as captives the women and children. When my informant was a child his people fought against the Pilaga on the Pilcomayo where they had gone fishing. The last encounter between the Toba and the Matako took place four years ago (1929) near Pozo del Tigre. In consequence of that conflict, the Matako made prisoner a Toba woman, but later on they surrendered her to her people for a payment.

Toba children taken captive by the Matako were raised like Matako children. Later they married women of the tribe and had in general the same rights as the other members of the group.

Not so long ago the Matako practiced scalping. A man who took a scalp gave it to his wife who danced to express her joy at her husband's killing an enemy.

XVIII. Dances

The dances begin at sunset and are continued until one or two o'clock in the morning. These are only for unmarried people and the dancers are always surrounded by the children of the village; they enjoy these affairs very much. Children normally do not take part in the dances, but are sometimes admitted among the dancers in order that they may learn the songs and dances.

1. All participants form a circle with their faces toward the center, the right hand on the shoulder of the person to the right and the left hand on the waist of the person to the left. One of the dancers starts singing very slowly and everybody stamps rhythmically, the right foot marking the time. After a few notes all the dancers begin to sing. The rhythm of the song and the movement of the dancers become livelier and livelier and gradually the stamping develops

756 The witch doctors have, also, the power of turning themselves into animals or fire that licks up the underbrush in their path.

In order to overcome diseases, the witch doctors make use of [825] small wands which the spirits have given them; they use also the wings of several birls (yulo, carancho).

Animals as well as men can be treated by the witch doctors. An informant described to me the treatment which was given to a horse. The witch doctor first recited an enchantment and then applied suction to the horse's rump until he was able to extract a small piece of wood which he said was the cause of the malady.

[754] Some witch doctors are extremely dangerous. They start by devouring dogs and then go on to attack men. It is almost impossible to put an end to their criminal career for they revive if they are killed and if they are burned to death they will still return.

[362] Some women can become witch doctors, although they enjoy far less prestige than do the man. Their vocation is made apparent by the following signs: they spend hours on end crouched over the ground, continually swaying back and forth, finally they make an attempt to flee into the underbrush and their strength is such that several men cannot restrain them. Once off in the bush, they tear off their [17] clothes and climb a tree, where they remain for several days swaying and singing.

Magic

789 609 The Matacos of San Andres complain bitterly that their neighbors the Tobas of the Pilcomayo river are great practitioners of magic. During the period of my stay at their village a Toba arrived to visit one of his friends. Not finding him at home he went to several huts in the hope of finding him. When he left, the Matacos accused him of witchcraft and said that his comings and goings were only to gather leavings (hair, nail parings, pieces of cloth, etc.) belonging to the people he had visited. The fact is that many of the persons whose houses the Toba visited became sick, which only confirmed the Matacos' suspicions. Nevertheless no sanction whatever came from this to the supposed criminal.

/213 cont./

755 2. The medicine men had transformed their "image"
756 (spirit) into isti'n, a bird of prey, in order to go find the illness,
774 but as on this occasion the latter had proved particularly
825 malicious, this first attempt at conciliation had failed, and the men had to transform themselves into mxsa', earth bees.

Ceremony for the Expulsion of Illness for the Benefit of One Person

(January 24, 1933)

755 In a small neighboring village a man was caught by naLi'le. Toward midnight he was dressed in red and white and
[292] seated in the center of the place for ceremonies; he was given two bells. Facing the sick man three sticks were stuck in the ground; one of them about two meters long was entirely covered with a dark cloth; the other two were 75 to 85 cm. long and had pieces of cloth attached to their upper part, which was topped with tufts of ostrich feathers. The two medicine men, dressed only in belts of ostrich feathers and holding iron rattles in their hands, were at the sick man's side. A little farther away were two assistants (probably members of the sick man's family) and three dancers; all were holding rattles.

[533] The medicine men sang and blew on the sick man, who shook his bells, while the dancers and the assistants stamped in
[535] place, /214/ making their rattles sound. The dancers next began to run around the group in the following manner: they went from left to right while turning their backs to the sticks; arriving level with the latter for the second time, they changed direction and continued in this fashion, alternately making two circles in each direction, while the assistants beat time with their feet and sang, making their rattles jingle, and the medicine men continued to sing and blow. The sick man had remained motionless during this time. After about ten circlings, the dancers